Mauro P. Porto
Department of Communication
Tulane University
mporto@tulane.edu

Office: 219 Newcomb Hall
Office hours: Tue and Thu, 9:30-10:30 a.m.
or by appointment
Phone: 862.3037

COMPARATIVE POLITICAL COMMUNICATION
COMM 281 - Spring 2006

Course Description
This course analyzes the links between media and political systems, based on a comparative approach. The purpose is to provide conceptual tools that will enable students to critically evaluate the role of the mass media in contemporary democracies. By identifying different forms of media and politics interaction, the course stresses how such interaction is shaped by broader social, economic, and cultural factors.

The emphasis of the course will be on societies from Europe and the Americas. This broad focus will allow a detailed comparison of political communication processes in a variety of contexts, from the postindustrial democracies of Western Europe and North America to the new emerging democracies of Latin America.

After introducing the features of the comparative method, the course presents a description of political and media systems that characterize Western Europe and the Americas. By identifying basic models of media and politics interaction, we will discuss how the social and economic contexts of different regions of the world are central to understanding the role of the media in political processes. The course concludes by considering whether globalization and related processes of commercialization and conglomeration are changing the role of communication technologies.

Course Texts
Daniel Hallin and Paolo Mancini, *Comparing Media Systems: Three Models of Media and Politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Elizabeth Fox and Silvio Waisbord (eds.), *Latin Politics, Global Media*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002.
        Both books available through Tulane Bookstore.

Required texts
Besides the two textbooks, we will work with several articles and book chapters which will be available online at *Electronic Reserves* (E-Res: <http://eres.library.tulane.edu/>). All students should have hard copies of the texts and bring them to the respective sessions. Failure to do so will affect your participation grade.

Blackboard
Blackboard will be used for posting announcements, assignments, grades and for the discussion board. The system can be accessed at: <http://blackboard.tulane.edu/>. If you have problems using the system, you can call the help desk: 862.8888.

Attendance
Regular attendance is required and attendance will be taken in every class meeting. You can miss three class sessions without penalty in your participation grade. Seven absences will result in notification of the Dean's office. Unexcused absences after notification will result in the final grade recommendation of a "WF" to the Dean.

Evaluation
Your final evaluation will be based on the following:
      1) <u>Midterm exam</u>: Students will take an in-class midterm exam which covers Part I of the course. A list of possible questions will be delivered to students in advance and two of the questions will be on the exam. The midterm is a closed book exam. Students should bring a pen and a blank blue book on the scheduled date for the exam;
      2) <u>Final exam</u>: Students will take an in-class final exam. The exam follows the same format of the midterm and will focus on Parts II, III, and IV of the course;
      3) <u>Participation</u>: Students are expected to actively participate in class discussions. Assigned readings should be completed prior to the classes for which they are listed in the syllabus. Students are expected present questions or comments about the readings, and might be called any time to present them in class. Attendance will also be considered when assessing participation;
      4) <u>Discussion board</u>: Students will be evaluated for their participation in the "Discussion Board" area of Blackboard. This is where our online discussions will take place. There will be one forum to each part of the course and the discussions will be "threaded", i.e. organized by topics.
      How to post to a discussion board: 1) click the discussion board button; 2) click on the respective "forum" (Part I, II, etc.); 3) add a new "thread" to the discussion or post a message (response or comment) to the existing thread. Click "add a new thread" to create a heading or click "reply" to comment on someone's posting. You will be expected to post at least one original thread to a discussion board for each of the four parts/forums of the course and to post at least two comments or responses to a classmate's posting for each part/forum. Whether you post more than these three messages per forum is entirely up to you. As long as you complete the 12 minimum posts (four threads and eight messages) with serious and thoughtful contributions, you will receive full credit for this portion of your grade.

Your final grade will be calculated in the following manner:

Midterm Exam	30 %	Participation	18 %
Final Exam	40 %	Discussion board:	12 %

Grading scale

A	94.0 to 100.0	B	84.0 to 86.9	C	74.0 to 76.9	D	64.0 to 66.9
A-	90.0 to 93.9	B-	80.0 to 83.9	C-	70.0 to 73.9	D-	60.0 to 63.9
B+	87.0 to 89.9	C+	77.0 to 79.9	D+	67.0 to 69.9	F	00.0 to 59.9

Academic dishonesty
Remember that plagiarism is a form of cheating. Do not present someone else's ideas as yours, without citing the source. This course adheres strictly to the Tulane Honor Code, available at:
< http://www.tulane.edu/~lasdean/honor%20code.htm>

Course Schedule

PART I
MEDIA AND POLITICAL SYSTEMS:
PATTERNS OF INTERACTION.

Jan 17 - Introduction to the procedures and contents of the course.
   (No readings).

Jan 19 - The comparative method.
   * Michael Gurevitch and Jay Blumler, "Comparative research: the extending frontier". In D. Swanson and Dan Nimmo (eds.), *New Directions in Political Communication*. London: Sage, 1990, pp. 305-315.
   * Hallin and Mancini, "Introduction", pp. 1-17.

Jan 24 - Media, public sphere and democracy: liberal and radical approaches.
   * Jurgen Habermas, "The public sphere: an encyclopedia article (1964)", *New German Critique*, Vol. 1, n. 3, 1974, pp. 49-55.
   * James Curran, "Mass media and democracy revisited". In James Curran & Michael Gurevitch (eds), *Mass Media and Society*. London: Arnold, 1996, pp. 81-104.

Jan 26 - Models of democracy compared: majoritarian democracies.
   * Arend Lijphart, *Patterns of Democracy*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999 (chapters 1 and 2, pp. 1-30).

Jan 31 - Models of democracy compared: consensus democracies.
   * Lijphart, *Patterns of Democracy* (chapter 3, pp. 31-47).

Feb 2 - Models of democracy compared: delegative democracies.
    * Guillermo O'Donnell, "Delegative democracy". In G. O'Donnell, *Counterpoints*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999, pp. 159-173.

Feb 7 - Media systems compared: Europe and North America.
   * Hallin and Mancini, chapter 2, pp. 21-45.

Feb 9 - Media systems compared: Latin America.
   * Fox and Waisbord, chapter 1, pp. 1-21.

Feb 14 - Interactions between media and political systems.
   * Hallin and Mancini, chapter 3, pp. 46-65.

Feb 16 - Interactions: Italian and U.S. TV news compared.
   * Daniel Hallin and Paolo Mancini, "Speaking of the president: political structure and representational form in U.S. and Italian TV News", *Theory and Society*, 13, 1984, pp. 829-850.

Feb 21 - Interactions: Mexico and Brazil compared.
   * John Sinclair, "Mexico and Brazil: the aging dynasties". In Fox and Waisbord, pp.123-136.
   * Rick Rockwell, "Mexico: the Fox factor". In Fox and Waisbord, pp. 107-122.

Feb 23 - MIDTERM EXAM.

Feb 28 and March 2 - No classes. Mardi Gras/Spring Break.

PART II
MODELS OF POLITICAL COMMUNICATION:
JOURNALISTIC VALUES AND PRACTICES COMPARED.

March 7 - The Polarized Pluralist Model (France, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain).
   * Hallin and Mancini, chapter 5, pp. 89-142.

March 9 - The Democratic Corporatist Model (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland).
   * Hallin and Mancini, chapter 6, pp. 143-197.

March 14 and 16 – No classes. Meeting of the Latin American Studies Association.

March 21 - The Liberal Model (Britain, United States, Canada, Ireland).
   * Hallin and Mancini, chapter 7, pp. 198-248.

March 23 - Is there a Latin American Model?
   * Daniel Hallin and Stylianos Papathanassopoulos, "Political clientelism and the media: Southern Europe and Latin America in comparative perspective". *Media, Culture & Society*, Vol. 24, n. 2, 2002, pp. 175-195.

March 28 - Journalistic values and practices compared.
   * Wolfgang Donsbach, "Lapdogs, watchdogs and junkyard dogs", *Media Studies Journal*, Vol. 9, n. 4, 1995.
   * Heloiza Herscovitz, "Brazilian journalists' perceptions of media roles, ethics and foreign influences on Brazilian journalism". *Journalism Studies*, Vol. 5, n. 1, 2004, pp. 71-86.

PART III
MEDIA AND POLITICAL SYSTEMS IN LATIN AMERICA.

March 30 - Central America.
   * Rick Rockwell and Noreene Janus, "The triumph of the media elite in postwar Central America". In Fox and Waisbord, pp. 47-68.

April 4 - Chile.
   * Valerio Fuenzalida, "The reform of national television in Chile". In Fox and Waisbord, pp. 69-88.

April 6 - Colombia.
   * Fernando Aparicio, "The Colombian media: modes and perspective in television". In Fox and Waisbord, pp. 89-106.

April 11 - Brazil and Uruguay compared.
   * Roberto Amaral, "Mass media in Brazil: modernization to prevent change". In Fox and Waisbord, pp. 38-46;
   * Roque Faraone, "Television and the new Uruguayan state". In Fox and Waisbord, pp. 164-175.

April 13 - Peru and Venezuela compared.
   * Luis Peirano, "Peruvian media in the 1990s: from deregulation to reorganization", in Fox and Waisbord, pp. 153-163; and
   * José Mayobre, "Venezuela and the media: the new paradigm", in Fox and Waisbord, pp. 176-186.

PART IV
IS POLITICAL COMMUNICATION CHANGING?

April 18 - Contemporary processes of convergence: commercialization, tabloidization, conglomeration.
   * Hallin and Mancini, chapter 8, pp. 251-295.

April 20 - Transnational television in Latin America.
   * John Sinclair, "International television channels in the Latin American audiovisual space". In Jean Chalaby (ed.), *Transnational Television Worldwide*. London: I.B.Tauris, 2005, pp. 196-215.

April 25 - Political communication in the Internet era,
   * Peter Dahlgren, "The public sphere and the net: structure, space, and communication". In W. Lance Bennett and Robert Entman (eds), *Mediated Politics: Communication in the Future of Democracy*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001, pp. 33-55.

 April 27 - Conclusions: Last day balance.
   * Hallin and Mancini, chapter 9, pp. 296-306.